

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

WE CLAIMS (clean copy)

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1. (original) A method of identifying and detecting channels in a multiplexed communications network, comprising the steps of:

 modulating each channel to be identified with a respective combination of at least two continuous dither tones, each dither tone having a precisely
10 determinable phase relationship sufficient for coherent processing of said each dither tone; and

 detecting the dither tones to detect said channels, the step of detecting the dither tones comprising performing an FFT (Fast Fourier Transform) operation to detect dither tones of a channel having a relatively high power and performing coherent
15 averaging of FFT results over a plurality of FFT operations, comprising an accumulation of the FFT amplitudes in accordance with their said respective determinable phase relationships for successive FFT periods, to detect dither tones of a channel having a relatively low power.

2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step
20 of modulating each channel to be identified with a respective combination of at least two continuous dither tones comprises modulating each channel alternately, with a predetermined periodicity, with a respective one of two continuous dither tones.

3. (original) A method as claimed in claim 2 wherein the
25 multiplexed communications network comprises an optical WDM network and each channel comprises an optical channel.

4. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step
 of modulating each channel to be identified with a respective combination of at least two continuous dither tones comprises modulating each channel with a respective one of at least three continuous dither tones with a cyclic repetition and a predetermined
30 periodicity.

5. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the multiplexed communications network comprises an optical WDM network and each channel comprises an optical channel.
6. (currently amended) A method of identifying an optical channel
5 in an optical WDM network, comprising the step of intensity modulating the optical channel with an alternating selection of at least two dither tones so that only one dither tone is modulated onto the optical channel at any given time, said dither tones are modulated in a cyclically repeated sequence and with a predetermined periodicity, wherein each dither tone in said alternating selection of dither tones is modulated onto
10 the optical channel during its respective predetermined time interval.
7. (original) A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein each optical channel to be identified is intensity modulated alternately with each of a respective two of said dither tones.
8. (original) A method as claimed in claim 7 and further
15 comprising the step of detecting intensity modulation of at least one optical signal, detecting dither tones of the optical signal using an FFT (Fast Fourier Transform) operation, and performing coherent averaging of FFT results over a plurality of FFT operations.
9. (original) A method as claimed in claim 6 and further
20 comprising the step of detecting intensity modulation of at least one optical signal, detecting dither tones of the optical signal using an FFT (Fast Fourier Transform) operation, and performing coherent averaging of FFT results over a plurality of FFT operations.
10. (original) A modulating arrangement comprising:
25 a plurality of continuous dither tone sources;
a selector for selecting at least two dither tones from said sources in a cyclically repeated sequence and with a predetermined periodicity;

a modulator for modulating a channel of a multiplexed communications network with the cyclically repeated sequence of dither tones from the selector; and

a feedback loop for maintaining a predetermined modulation depth of the channel by the modulator.

- 5 11. (original) A modulating arrangement as claimed in claim 10 wherein the selector is arranged for selecting alternately each of two dither tones from said sources.

12. (original) A modulating arrangement as claimed in claim 10 wherein the multiplexed communications network comprises an optical WDM network and the
10 modulator comprises an optical modulator for intensity modulating an optical channel of the optical WDM network.

13. (original) A modulating arrangement as claimed in claim 12 wherein the selector is arranged for selecting alternately each of two dither tones from said sources.

- 15 14. (original) A detection arrangement for use in a multiplexed communications network including a modulating arrangement as claimed in claim 10, the detection arrangement comprising a detector for detecting the modulation by said modulator, an FFT (Fast Fourier Transform) operation for producing FFT results corresponding to said dither tones, and an arrangement for coherent averaging of the
20 FFT results over a plurality of FFT operations.

15. (original) A detection arrangement as claimed in claim 14 wherein the detector comprises an optical detector for detecting intensity modulation of an optical signal in an optical WDM network.